Libya (UNSMIL), representing a technical rollover of 50 per cent of the levels of projected expenditures for 2014.

3. The Advisory Committee also recalls that, in its resolution 69/262, the General Assembly: (a) approved budgets totalling $480,262,600 for the 35 special political missions for 2015; (b) approved a charge totalling $435,094,000 net, corresponding to the undistributed balance in the provision for special political missions for the biennium 2014-2015; and (c) decided to appropriate an amount of $31,501,300 under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (additional to the biennial provision of $1,081,089,900 net earlier approved for special political missions under section 3). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the additional amount of $31,501,300 had been assessed in January 2015 and included the six-month budgets for UNAMA and UNSMIL.

4. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was also informed that the Secretary-General was seeking additional appropriations of $94,006,100 net for the biennium 2014-2015 for the following four special political missions: UNSMIL, the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB), UNAMA and the Panel of Experts on South Sudan (see A/69/363/Add.6-8).[1] Concerning the assessment of the additional requirements, the Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the amount of $94,006,100 would be included in a General Assembly resolution as part of the final appropriation under the programme budget for 2014-2015 and would form part of the subsequent assessment in January 2016.

5. **The Advisory Committee notes that, taking into account the additional resources ($31,501,300) appropriated in resolution 69/262 and the amount currently requested ($94,006,100), the total additional resources required for the special political missions would be $125,507,400, or 11.6 per cent, over the initial approved resources of $1,081,089,900 for special political missions for 2014-2015 under section 3 of the programme budget.**

Presentation of 2015 resource requirements for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

6. The Advisory Committee recalls that, when presenting the interim six-month resources for UNAMA, the Secretary-General indicated that a detailed and full budget proposal for 2015 would be prepared and submitted for consideration by the General Assembly during the second part of its resumed sixty-ninth session following a decision of the Security Council regarding the Mission's mandate (see A/69/628, para. 176). The Committee was informed at the time that this arrangement would ensure that funding would be available to support UNAMA for the first half of 2015, without pre-empting the technical assessment of the Mission scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2014, and that the operational environment in Afghanistan would be more clear by the first quarter of 2015 in terms of the political, economic and security situation (ibid., para. 178).

7. However, in his 12-month budget proposal for UNAMA, the Secretary-General indicates the following concerning developments in the country and the renewal of the mandate of the Mission, inter alia (see A/69/363/Add.7, paras. 13-15):

[1] The related reports of the Advisory Committee are A/69/628/Add.1-3.

(a) The planned United Nations assessment mission, which was deployed from 30 January to 10 February 2015, was smaller in scope than originally anticipated, in response to the protracted political transition processes and prevailing environment in the country. The Government indicated that further dialogue with the United Nations and international stakeholders would continue in the months ahead;

(b) Under these circumstances, discussions on the future UNAMA mandate, to be decided by the Security Council, were focused on the possible renewal of the Mission's currently mandated core functions that promoted Afghanistan's peace and stability.

8. The Advisory Committee notes that the proposed full budget for 2015 is based on the mandate of UNAMA authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2145 (2014) of 17 March 2014 (rather than the latest relevant resolution, resolution 2210 (2015) of 16 March 2015). In response to its request for clarification as to the validity and completeness of the proposed 2015 budget, the Advisory Committee was informed that, following consultations with the Government, the mandate of UNAMA had been extended by the Security Council in its resolution 2210 (2015) without significant changes compared with the preceding resolution 2145 (2014). The Committee was also informed that, given the Council's adoption of the mandate in March 2015 and the conditions prevailing in the country, which included an evolving agenda on the part of the new Government to address the sharpening economic and security challenges, the proposed 2015 budget was valid and complete.

9. In its review of the six-month interim resource requirements for UNAMA for 2015, the Advisory Committee questioned the criteria on which the Secretary-General had based his decision not to submit a full budget proposal for UNAMA for 2015. The Committee reiterated that the estimates of the requirements of the Mission must be based on the existing resolutions of the Security Council, rather than on any anticipated further decisions that the Council might make in response to the Secretary-General's recommendations. Should the decision of the Council entail budget implications, the existing budgetary process provides the flexibility necessary for the Secretary-General to propose appropriate adjustments. The Committee has pointed out that matters affecting the political transition in the country are within the purview of the Security Council and will be addressed by the Council when it considers the Mission's mandate (see A/69/628, paras. 180 and 181).

10. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that the presentation of the six-month financing arrangement and the 12-month full budget by the Secretary-General entails the consideration by the General Assembly of two proposals pertaining to the same financial period for a given mission, which in turn unnecessarily complicates the budget review process carried out by the Assembly. The Committee is strongly of the view that, in keeping with the normal budget cycle, the Secretary-General's budget proposals should, to the extent possible, cover the full 12-month financial period (ibid., para. 182).**

III. 12-month resource requirements for 2015

A. Mandate and planning for 2015

11. The Security Council, in its resolution 2210 (2015), renewed the mandate of UNAMA until 17 March 2016. The Secretary-General indicates that at the close of 2014, the overall Kabul process of transition covering political, security and socioeconomic aspects was completed, and that the key milestones of the process were passed in the fourth quarter of 2014, with the conclusion of the presidential and Provincial Council elections, the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force and the holding of the Beijing and London conferences on future regional cooperation and the development agenda. Furthermore, the Secretary-General indicates that the 21 September 2014 agreement to form a national unity Government was welcomed, as it provided for the establishment of a broad-based and representative administration to address the challenges that the country will face in 2015. Afghanistan, therefore, entered the "transformation decade" on 1 January 2015, having assumed full leadership and ownership of its national affairs (see A/69/363/Add.7, para. 2).

12. The priorities and planning assumptions for 2015 are described in paragraphs 22-24 of the budget document (A/69/363/Add.7). The Secretary-General indicates that, in accordance with the mandate set out by the Security Council in its resolution 2145 (2014), UNAMA, guided by the principle of reinforcing Afghan sovereignty, ownership and leadership, will continue to focus on priorities related to political support, human rights and development coherence. The Secretary-General also indicates that the UNAMA field presence, comprising 13 field offices, will continue to remain central to the implementation of the Mission's priorities in 2015 (see also para. 17 below).

13. According to the Secretary-General, the security environment in 2015 will remain fragile and unpredictable and the activities of the United Nations will continue to be affected by security challenges similar to those experienced in previous years. With the conclusion of the security transition (see para. 11 above), the focus in 2015 will be on the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces to counter anti-Government elements, prevent further erosion of the security environment and provide a stable and secure environment (ibid., para. 28).

B. Resource requirements

14. The proposed resource requirements for UNAMA for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015 are estimated at $187,972,000 net, reflecting a decrease of $3,392,500, or 1.8 per cent, compared with the resources approved for 2014. The decrease reflects lower requirements for operational costs ($7,272,300), owing mainly to reduced flying hours, fewer aircraft rentals and lower fuel costs, offset in part by increases for civilian personnel costs ($3,879,800), relating mainly to increased salary scales for national staff in 2014 and increased common staff costs for international staff (ibid., paras. 43 and 44 and table 1).

15. Of the proposed 12-month requirements of $187,972,000 for 2015 for UNAMA, the Secretary-General requests an additional appropriation of $84,698,800, taking into account the unencumbered balance for 2014 ($9,733,700)

and the six-month interim resources appropriated by the General Assembly for 2015 ($93,539,500) (ibid., para. 208 (b); see also paras. 2-5 above).

1. Military and police personnel

16. The estimated requirements for military and police personnel for 2015 amount to $971,400, the same level of appropriation as that for 2014. Taking into account the unencumbered balance of $293,500 for 2014, the net requirements for 2015 amount to $677,900. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the resources proposed for military and police personnel for 2015.**

2. Civilian personnel

United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan: staffing requirements

	Positions	*Level*
Approved positions for 2014	1 690	1 USG, 2 ASG, 3 D-2, 6 D-1, 28 P-5, 80 P-4, 80 P-3, 26 P-2, 175 FS, 187 NPO, 1,022 LL, 80 UNV
Proposed positions for 2015	1 680	1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 8 D-1, 28 P-5, 80 P-4, 83 P-3, 25 P-2, 170 FS, 1 GS (OL), 186 NPO, 1,016 LL, 79 UNV
Proposed new positions	6	1 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 GS (OL)
Proposed redeployments	13	2 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 2 FS, 2 NPO and 1 LL
Proposed reclassifications	5	1 D-2 to D-1, 1 P-5 to P-4, 2 P-4 to P-3 and 1 FS to P-3
Proposed abolishments	16	1 D-2, 1 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 4 FS, 1 NPO, 6 LL and 1 UNV

Abbreviations: USG, Under-Secretary-General; ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; UNV, United Nations Volunteer.

17. A summary of the staffing requirements and the proposed changes is contained in paragraphs 46-53 of the budget document. The total of 1,680 positions proposed for 2015 represents a net reduction of 10 positions compared with the approved staffing for 2014 (see the table above). The proposed allocation of the positions by location is as follows (ibid., para. 53 and table 3):

(a) UNAMA headquarters in Kabul (839 positions);

(b) Seven regional offices (543 positions);

(c) Six provincial offices (216 positions);

(d) UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait (68 positions) (see paras. 22-25 below);

(e) Liaison offices in Islamabad and Tehran (8 positions);

(f) Backstopping at Headquarters (6 positions) (see para. 21 below).

18. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the staffing requirements proposed by the Secretary-General for UNAMA for 2015, with the exception of one P-4 position at Headquarters and one Local level position in the Kabul regional office (see paras. 21 and 36 below).**

Backstopping by the Department of Political Affairs

19. It is proposed that six new positions (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)) be established for six months, from July to December 2015, in the Middle East and West Asia Division of the Department of Political Affairs in New York to backstop UNAMA, which is the largest special political mission. The Secretary-General indicates that, given the continued political, economic and security uncertainties in Afghanistan, the Department's capacity to respond to backstopping demands will remain essential. Such demands range from providing operational support and strengthening Mission planning to assisting in identifying and prioritizing critical strategic objectives in line with the mandate of the Mission and political needs, and engagement with Member States and other key regional and international partners (ibid., paras. 51 and 78 (b) and (c)). The main duties and responsibilities of the proposed positions are described in paragraph 78 (c) of the proposed budget.

20. The Advisory Committee recalls that the lead responsibility for the backstopping of UNAMA was transferred from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs on 1 October 2014 and that, as part of the measures to ensure a smooth transfer, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has lent three staff members (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3, funded from the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2014/15) to the Department of Political Affairs from its now-disbanded Afghanistan integrated operational team for the period from 1 October 2014 to 30 June 2015. The Committee also recalls that, in order to ensure that the same level of support is provided to UNAMA as that provided by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs has recruited a Transition Team Leader at the D-1 level funded through extrabudgetary resources for the same period (see A/69/628, paras. 42 and 43). Upon enquiry, the Committee was provided with the table below, showing the staffing capacity and sources of funding for the backstopping of UNAMA by the Department of Political Affairs, compared with the capacity provided by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations until September 2014.

Staffing to backstop the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan at Headquarters

Department of Peacekeeping Operations (until September 2014)	*Department of Political Affairs (October 2014-June 2015)*	*Funding source*
1 D-1[a]	1 D-1	Extrabudgetary
1 P-5 (Political Affairs Officer)	1 P-5 (Political Affairs Officer)	Department of Peacekeeping Operations loan
1 P-5 (Department of Field Support Specialist)[a]	–	–
1 P-5 (Military Adviser)[a]	–	–
1 P-4 (Political Affairs Officer)	1 P-4 (Political Affairs Officer)	Department of Peacekeeping Operations loan

Department of Peacekeeping Operations (until September 2014)	*Department of Political Affairs (October 2014-June 2015)*	*Funding source*
1 P-4 (Political Affairs Officer)[b]	1 P-4 (Political Affairs Officer)	Extrabudgetary
1 P-3 (Political Affairs Officer)	1 P-3 (Political Affairs Officer)	Department of Peacekeeping Operations loan
1 General Service	1 General Service	Extrabudgetary

[a] Also covered the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan.
[b] Department of Political Affairs loan on a half-time basis for the period from August 2013 to October 2014.

21. The Advisory Committee notes from the table above that the staffing capacity provided by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations also covered the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan and that one of the two P-4 positions was lent on a half-time basis for the backstopping of UNAMA for the period from August 2013 to October 2014. The Committee also notes that the staff positions requested for the Department of Political Affairs will backstop UNAMA only. **The Advisory Committee therefore recommends the approval of the establishment of five new positions (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)) for the backstopping of UNAMA in the Department of Political Affairs and recommends against the establishment of 1 P-4 position. The related resources under operational costs should be reduced accordingly.**

UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and Kuwait Joint Support Office

22. Information with respect to both the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and the Kuwait Joint Support Office is provided in paragraphs 128-142 of the proposed budget. It is indicated that the UNAMA Support Office officially began to operate in Kuwait in 2010 and is co-located with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) Support Office (operational since 2004). Furthermore, the Kuwait Joint Support Office was launched in December 2012, not as a separately funded office, but as a jointly integral component of both UNAMA and UNAMI, funded through the assessed budgets for both missions and managed by both missions.

23. It is also indicated that in 2014, the staffing strength and capacity of both the Kuwait Joint Support Office and the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait were enhanced by transferring additional administrative and technical functions to Kuwait and redeploying positions from Kabul to Kuwait, including most of the remaining functions and staff in the areas of finance, human resources and claims, as well as elements of communications and information technology, geographic information, information management, property management and budget. In addition, the Resident Auditors and Conduct and Discipline Units were redeployed to Kuwait in 2014. A disaster recovery and business continuity system was established in Kuwait expressly to support both UNAMA and UNAMI should it become necessary (see A/69/363/Add.7, para. 136).

24. A total of 68 positions are proposed for both the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and the Kuwait Joint Support Office (ibid., table 9). The Secretary-General

indicates that 40 positions are assigned dual responsibilities and support both UNAMA and UNAMI by carrying out administrative tasks as part of the Kuwait Joint Support Office, including in the areas of finance and human resources, and that the remaining 28 positions, which are located in Kuwait to reduce the UNAMA footprint in Kabul, will continue to carry out duties in the areas of conduct and discipline, audit, budget, geographic information, communications and information technology, information management, procurement, property survey and claims, transport and security, with the incumbents continuing to report directly to their respective section chiefs, who are located in Kabul (ibid., paras. 130 and 131). In response to a request for clarification, the Advisory Committee received a revised annex I.D to the proposed budget of the Secretary-General, indicating a total of 68 positions under the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait (28 positions) and the Kuwait Joint Support Office (40 positions) (see the annex to the present report).

25. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the information contained in the proposed budget of the Secretary-General lacks clarity with regard to the structures, functions and capacity of the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and the Kuwait Joint Support Office. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to improve the presentation of the information contained in future budget submissions, including also the UNAMI Support Office in Kuwait.**

Redeployment of one Conduct and Discipline Officer (National Professional Officer) from Kuwait to Kabul

26. The Secretary-General indicates that, in view of the establishment of an integrated Conduct and Discipline Unit for UNAMA and UNAMI in Kuwait, the position of Conduct and Discipline Officer (National Professional Officer) earlier deployed by UNAMA to the Kuwait Office is no longer required, as a staff member from UNAMI has joined the Office in order to provide support to the integrated Unit. It is therefore proposed that the position of Conduct and Discipline Officer (National Professional Officer) be redeployed from Kuwait to Kabul (ibid., para. 73).

27. Concerning the rationale for the proposed redeployment of a National Professional Officer from Kuwait to Kabul, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that UNAMA found it difficult to effectively address the Mission's conduct and discipline needs without the presence of a Conduct and Discipline Officer in Kabul. The Committee was also informed that, as the largest special political mission, with 1,680 staff, the Mission had a need for more robust and timely face-to-face support on often sensitive conduct and discipline issues. In addition to supporting the daily management of conduct and discipline matters, the National Professional Officer will serve as a critical link to national staff, who often prefer to discuss issues in person and in their own language. Furthermore, the National Professional Officer will conduct induction and mandatory training on United Nations standards of conduct, the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and prohibited conduct, which cannot be easily conducted remotely from Kuwait. In addition, the Committee was informed that the proposed redeployment would result in annual savings of $49,044 as a result of the difference in salary scales for National Professional Officers between Kuwait and Kabul.

28. With respect to the establishment of the integrated Conduct and Discipline Unit in Kuwait, the Advisory Committee recalls that during its review of the

proposed budget for 2014 for UNAMA, it was informed that, in an effort to strengthen the conduct and discipline functions in the region, the conduct and discipline functions at UNAMA and UNAMI would be integrated. The proposed new Conduct and Discipline Team was to comprise four positions (1 P-5 and 1 National Professional Officer financed by the UNAMA budget and 1 National Professional Officer and 1 Local level financed by the UNAMI budget). Given its larger size, UNAMA would lead under the integrated structure (A/68/7/Add.10 and Corr.1, paras. 193 and 194).

29. The Advisory Committee notes that the positions under the Conduct and Discipline Unit were redeployed from Kabul to Kuwait in 2014 (see para. 23 above) and that one year later, in 2015, a reverse redeployment from Kuwait to Kabul is proposed by UNAMA. **While the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposed redeployment of a position of Conduct and Discipline Officer (National Professional Officer) from Kuwait to Kabul, it is of the view that as an established mission, UNAMA could have better planned for the requirements of this function in the field.**

Redeployment of one Human Resources Officer (Field Service) from Kuwait to Kabul

30. It is proposed that one Field Service position be redeployed from Kuwait to Kabul under the Human Resources Section (see A/69/363/Add.7, para. 119). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed redeployment, along with the current functions and incumbent, was aligned with the intention of the Field Personnel Division of the Department of Field Support to reprofile the functions of the Chief Human Resources Officers at field missions and to restructure the Human Resources Sections. Furthermore, the position was required in the Human Resources Section in Kabul in view of the additional delegation of authority granted to field missions related to staff entitlement administration, recruitment and workforce planning. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the cost implications of the proposed redeployment would include two portions: (a) a recurrent annual cost of $18,925 (at 2015 rates) and (b) a one-time transfer entitlement of $23,798, payable to the incumbent upon change in duty station.

Realignment of work related to civil affairs

31. The Secretary-General indicates that, to align the Mission's civil affairs and field coordination structures with the post-transition context, it is proposed that, inter alia, one position of Director of Civil Affairs and Development (D-2) be abolished, following the proposed discontinuation of the Office of the Director of Civil Affairs and Development and the transfer of its functions to the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator) and the Office of the Chief of Staff (ibid., paras. 85 and 87 (e)). In addition, it is proposed that one position of Head of Office (D-1) be redeployed from the Kandahar regional office to the Civil Affairs Unit to carry out duties as Director (ibid., para. 90 (a)).

32. In response to its request for clarification as to the need for the redeployment of the D-1 position (Head of Office, Kandahar) to the Civil Affairs Unit in Kabul, the Advisory Committee was informed that, with the proposed abolishment of the D-2 position, a D-1 position would be needed to provide high-level support to the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian

Coordinator) in his work to support the reform agenda of the national unity Government. Specifically, the D-1 position will take the lead in the provision of UNAMA support to the Government on issues related to governance and economic and social development, including the facilitation and coordination of the international community's support for the national and subnational development and governance priorities. In this work, the D-1 position will also work closely with senior officials of the Government of Afghanistan and will also lead the Mission's work to support the Government's anti-corruption efforts. While the D-1 Director works at the strategic and policy level, the P-5 Officer in the Unit will be responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Civil Affairs Unit.

Vacancy rates

33. The Secretary-General proposes the application of vacancy factors for 2015 as follows (ibid., paras. 54 and 55): (a) 12 per cent for international staff, compared with the actual average of 16 per cent for 2014; (b) 6 per cent for National Professional Officers and 4 per cent for Local level staff, the same as the actual average for 2014; and (c) 11 per cent for United Nations Volunteers, compared with the actual average of 18 per cent for 2014.

34. With respect to the proposed vacancy factor of 12 per cent for international staff for 2015, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the actual vacancy rate as at 31 March 2015 had been 10.7 per cent, with an average rate of 12 per cent for the period from January to March 2015. The Committee was also informed that, in establishing the proposed vacancy factor of 12 per cent for international staff for 2015, several factors had been considered by the Mission, including: (a) the proposed abolishment of eight vacant international positions; (b) a prioritized goal of expediting recruitment for vacant positions; and (c) the commitment of the Mission's senior management to achieve an optimal vacancy factor of approximately 11 per cent through regular monitoring. **The Advisory Committee questions the validity of aiming for the achievement of an "optimal" vacancy factor by the Mission's management. In this connection, the Committee reiterates that all vacant positions should be filled expeditiously.**

35. As for the vacancy factor of 11 per cent proposed for United Nations Volunteers for 2015, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the actual vacancy rate had been 34.2 per cent at the end of March 2015 and that the actual average rate had been 24.1 per cent for the period from January to March 2015 for the category. **The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that a vacancy factor of 20 per cent be applied to the estimates for United Nations Volunteers for 2015. Related resources under the operational costs should be adjusted as appropriate.**

Vacant positions over two years

36. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that a total of five positions (1 P-3 and 4 Local level) at the Mission had been vacant for two years or longer. The Committee notes from the information provided to it that, while the other four positions are under various stages of recruitment, draft terms of reference for the position of Administrative Assistant (Local level) at the Kabul regional office were sent to the Head of the Office only on 1 April 2015, notwithstanding the fact that the position has been vacant since 31 December 2012. **The Advisory**

Committee recommends that the position of Administrative Assistant (Local level) in the Kabul regional office, which has been vacant since 31 December 2012 and has not been advertised, be abolished. The related resources under operational costs should be reduced accordingly. The Committee reiterates that all vacant positions should be filled expeditiously.

Classification of positions

37. During its consideration of the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2015 (see A/69/750), the Advisory Committee was informed that, with the harmonization of conditions of service and the designation of missions as family and non-family duty stations in 2010, the requirement for classification had been expanded to all peacekeeping operations as well as special political missions. According to the information provided to the Committee, over 6,000 posts in field missions have been classified since the harmonization, while an estimated 7,000 additional posts in the substantive job families, as well as 10,000 posts in other non-substantive job families, remain to be classified (see A/69/860, para. 59). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that at present, positions in UNAMA were not classified and that a project team in the Field Personnel Division of the Department of Field Support was working on the classification of positions with a streamlined approach for all special political missions.

38. **The Advisory Committee expects that the classification exercise will serve as an objective means to align existing job functions with their appropriate levels (ibid., para. 60). The Committee trusts that positions for all special political missions will be classified as soon as possible and recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to report in the proposed budget for 2016 on the progress made in this regard.**

3. Operational costs

39. The estimated requirements for operational costs for 2015 amounts to $69,200,800, reflecting a decrease of $7,272,300 compared with the provision for 2014 (see also para. 14 above). **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the resources requested for operational costs, subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 21, 35 and 36 above and paragraph 47 below.**

Rental of premises and alteration, renovation and construction services

40. The Secretary-General indicates that, in view of the completion in 2014 of the construction of offices and staff accommodation facilities, the upgrading and overhauling of communications and information technology equipment and the acquisition of additional armoured vehicles and other security-related investments, no additional significant investment is required in these areas for 2015 (see A/69/363/Add.7, para. 26).

41. With respect to the proposed provisions under facilities and infrastructure for 2015 for the rental of premises ($4,239,600) and alteration, renovation and construction services ($4,063,900) (ibid., para. 187 (b) and (f)), the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, of the following:

(a) The provision for the rental of premises would cover 50 premises, of which 40 are under commercial contracts and 10 were under memorandums of understanding (7 of the 10 under memorandums of understanding were free of cost to the Mission). The increase in requirements compared with 2014 ($278,040) was due to the increased monthly rent of Palace 7, as a result of a revised lease agreement signed in 2014;

(b) The provision for alteration, renovation and construction services would cover: (i) alteration and renovation ($169,583) for the repair and maintenance of premises, calculated at the rate of 4 per cent of the rental cost of the premises at each location; and (ii) construction services, including the provision for the sixth instalment towards the construction cost of the Alpha compound in Kabul ($3,214,285); the other cost related to the Alpha compound was the rental portion of this contract, which was budgeted separately under rental of premises ($2,286,005).

Security services

42. The provision for security services is estimated at $11,850,000 for 2015, as listed under facilities and infrastructure in the proposed budget (ibid., para. 187 (e) (i)-(viii)). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General has not provided sufficient detailed information for the requested resources of $11,850,000 for security services for 2015. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to improve the budgetary presentation in this regard. In addition, the Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide, in the relevant performance reports, information on the utilization of the resources provided to non-United Nations personnel, including details on how the release of supplies is authorized and accounted for (see A/69/839/Add.5, para. 70; see also para. 43 below).**

43. With respect to the use of the term "international armed guards", the Advisory Committee recalls that at UNAMA, these guards are in fact contractual personnel of private security firms providing services to the United Nations (see A/68/7/Add.10, para. 180). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that in addition, such contractual personnel include some armed static guards and quick-reaction force guards as well as some unarmed guards and canine services. The Committee also recalls that it expressed its expectation that the Secretary-General would clearly distinguish in all budgetary proposals between requirements for the armed guards provided by police- and troop-contributing countries and those obtained from private security companies, as appropriate. **The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General has not provided clear information on all contractual personnel of private security firms in the proposed budget for UNAMA for 2015, and urges him to do so in future budget submissions. The Committee reiterates its view that, in the light of the fact that the name "United Nations guards" is used to refer to personnel provided by police- and troop-contributing countries, it is not appropriate to use the term "international armed guards" to refer to private security personnel (ibid., para. 180).**

44. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recalls that, in its report on the use of private security, it had recommended that the relevant committees of the General Assembly consider the United Nations policy on the use of armed private security companies (see A/67/624, para. 25), and also recalls section V of General Assembly resolution 67/254 A, in which the Assembly stressed the importance of ensuring that

all measures necessary were taken to avoid legal and reputational risks for the Organization in using armed security services of private security companies. In the same resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to provide clarification on the operational criteria for when the use of armed security services from private security companies could be appropriate for United Nations operations at Headquarters and field locations and to report thereon in the relevant reports to the Assembly. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide information on the use of private security companies in all future budgets for special political missions (see A/68/7/Add.10, para. 180).**

Fuel unit cost and quantity

45. The requirement for petrol, oil and lubricants for generators for 2015 is estimated at $7,158,300, on the basis of the estimated consumption of 6 million litres of generator fuel at a rate of $1.19 per litre (see A/69/363/Add.7, para. 187 (j)). The Advisory Committee requested budgeted and actual fuel cost and consumption for 2014 and was informed that the actual average price per litre was $1.19, compared with the budgeted cost of $1.25 per litre, and that the actual consumption was 5,554,013 litres, compared with the 6 million litres budgeted for 2014. The Committee was also informed that for 2015, the proposed amount of $7,158,300 was based on an estimated requirement of 5,682,429 litres at an average price of $1.188 per litre ($6,753,000), to which a provision for oil and lubricants ($405,300) was added. The Committee was further informed that, in 2014, provisions for aviation fuel had been made for an estimated 2.5 million litres, on the basis of 3,780 flight hours, at a rate of $1.686 per litre. The actual consumption had been 1.58 million litres for 2,671 flight hours, at an actual average cost of $1.556 per litre.

Official travel

46. The proposed requirements for official travel amount to $1,874,500, compared with the provision of $1,880,000 for 2014. The Advisory Committee notes that the expenditure for 2014 amounted to $1,681,000. According to the Secretary-General, the unencumbered balance for 2014 relates mainly to a reduced number of trips undertaken by staff, as the result of the institution of a stricter travel policy (ibid., para. 186). In response to its request, the Advisory Committee received detailed information on official travel planned for 2015, which includes multiple trips to Headquarters, such as various annual conferences for 18 section chiefs at $8,500 per trip, with a total cost of $153,000, in addition to Headquarters trips to the Mission. In this regard, the Committee recalls its view that "non-training" travel relating to participation in workshops, conferences and knowledge-sharing activities should more appropriately have been categorized under the "training" category and that, in its resolution 67/254 A, the General Assembly decided that staff participating in training-related activities would be required to travel in economy class, irrespective of the duration of the travel (see A/69/650, paras. 60 and 61).

47. **The Advisory Committee has identified a number of issues related to the trips planned for 2015, such as multiple trips to the same or nearby destinations and the need for more frequent use of video- and teleconferencing. The Committee is of the view that the consolidation of travel requirements should be carried out, and therefore recommends a reduction of 5 per cent**

($42,855) to the proposed resources ($857,100) for official travel outside the mission area (non-training) for UNAMA for 2015/16.

48. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that resources for official travel should be utilized judiciously in the interest of the Organization and that the primary consideration in authorizing official travel should be whether direct face-to-face contact is necessary for mandate implementation. If not, then alternative means of communication should be employed (see A/69/787, para. 29).**

49. **Furthermore, the Advisory Committee is of the view that measures such as the consolidation of trips and alternative means of communication will not only contribute to the more efficient use of financial resources, but also reduce the disruptive effect that frequent or extended absences from missions can have on the day-to-day work of staff.**

IV. Conclusion

50. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are contained in paragraph 208 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363/Add.7). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly:**

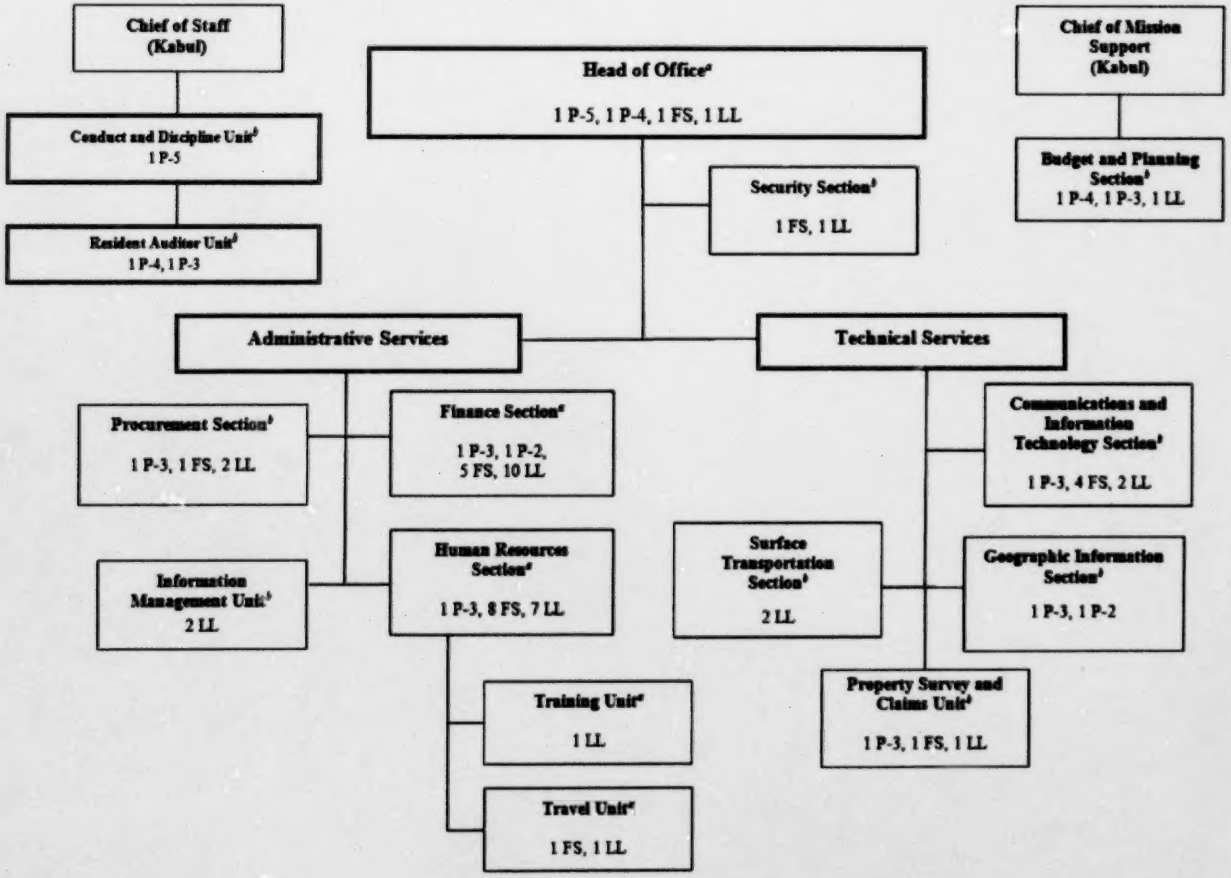
(a) **Approve the budget in the amount of $187,470,100 (net of staff assessment) for UNAMA for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015;**

(b) **Appropriate, under the procedures provided for in paragraph 11 of annex I to resolution 41/213, an additional amount of $84,196,900 under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, after taking into account the unencumbered balance of $9,733,700 for 2014 and the amount of $93,539,500 appropriated by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/262 as interim resources for UNAMA for 2015;**

(c) **Appropriate an amount of $7,105,200 under section 36, Staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.**

Annex

UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and Kuwait Joint Support Office (excluding positions funded under the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq)


Chief of Staff (Kabul)
Conduct and Discipline Unit[b] 1 P-5
Resident Auditor Unit[b] 1 P-4, 1 P-3
Head of Office[a] 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 FS, 1 LL
Security Section[b] 1 FS, 1 LL
Chief of Mission Support (Kabul)
Budget and Planning Section[b] 1 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 LL
Administrative Services
Technical Services
Procurement Section[b] 1 P-3, 1 FS, 2 LL
Finance Section[a] 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 5 FS, 10 LL
Communications and Information Technology Section[b] 1 P-3, 4 FS, 2 LL
Information Management Unit[b] 2 LL
Human Resources Section[a] 1 P-3, 8 FS, 7 LL
Surface Transportation Section[b] 2 LL
Geographic Information Section[b] 1 P-3, 1 P-2
Training Unit[a] 1 LL
Travel Unit[a] 1 FS, 1 LL
Property Survey and Claims Unit[b] 1 P-3, 1 FS, 1 LL

[a] UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait (40 positions).
[b] Kuwait Joint Support Office (28 positions).